



BRIEFING NOTE TO THE DEPUTY MINISTER

RENEWAL OF THE COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS NETWORK PROJECT

(For Information)

PURPOSE

- This note provides a status update on the extension of the contribution agreement with the Smart Cities Community Support Program's (SCCSP) current funding recipient, Evergreen, to support the delivery of their programming for an additional two years.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- The recommendation to renew Evergreen's project, branded the *Community Solutions Network*, is based on their demonstrated success so far in building community capacity and raising awareness of smart cities opportunities and issues across Canada. Together with their implementation partner OpenNorth, Evergreen has now established itself as Canada's go-to centre of expertise and information clearinghouse in open smart cities. They have also succeeded in establishing robust networks of organizations and experts involved in the smart cities domain and have leveraged these networks – which span the non-profit, public, private and academic sectors – to support the successful delivery of their project activities in all regions of Canada. Please see **Annex A** for further details of Evergreen's activities and results.
- Renewal of project funding for an additional two years leverages the department's existing investments and allows Evergreen to continue to deliver and build on their important community capacity-building, knowledge generation and sharing activities.

•

KEY BACKGROUND

- Following a competitive open call for applications in summer 2018, Evergreen was selected to receive up to \$4.6 million in funding through the SCCSP. Their *Community Solutions Network* project, in partnership with OpenNorth, is funded to provide advisory and capacity-

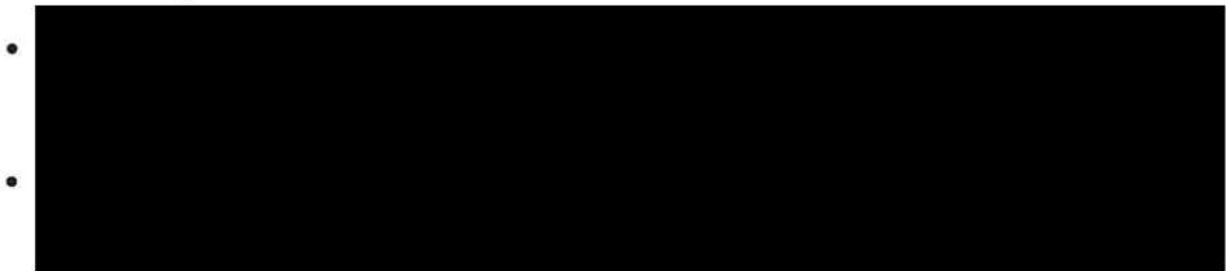
UNCLASSIFIED

building services directly to communities of all sizes as they explore and implement smart cities approaches.

- The contribution agreement with Evergreen was set to end on March 31, 2020. The department has provided Evergreen with an approval-in-principle letter to extend their contribution agreement for an additional two years with funding up to \$2.3 million a year.
- As per the department's delegation of authorities, authority for the extension of the agreement rests at the Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) level. The decision to extend the contribution agreement with Evergreen was approved by the ADM, Policy and Results Branch in early January. As a result of a departmental reorganization, the ADM of Communities and Rural Economic Development is now responsible for the management and delivery of the Smart Cities Challenge and the SCCSP.

NEXT STEPS

- The Resilient and Innovative Communities Directorate is working with Evergreen on the extension of the contribution agreement and allow for the continued delivery of the *Community Solutions Network*.




Alison O'Leary
Assistant Deputy Minister
Communities and Rural Economic Development

6 Feb 2020.
Date

Attachments:

Annex A: Community Solutions Network: Key Results to Date

UNCLASSIFIED

ANNEX A: COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS NETWORK: KEY RESULTS TO DATE

Key Result 1: Deliver Community-based Learning Events

The *Community Solutions Network* has been active across Canada, engaging large- and medium-sized population centres as well as small, rural and indigenous communities.

In addition to attending and presenting at over a dozen regional and national municipal association conferences over the past year, the *Community Solutions Network* has also delivered the following events:

- Future Cities Summit, Toronto, Ontario (November 7-9, 2018)
- Pacific Collision Day, Vancouver, BC (May 23, 2019)
- Ontario Collision Day, Waterloo, Ontario (November 4, 2019)
- Atlantic Collision Day, Moncton, New Brunswick (October 10, 2019)
- Prairies Collision Day, Winnipeg, Manitoba (October 17, 2019)
- Quebec Collision Day, Quebec City, Quebec (November 13, 2019)
- Central Community Roundtable, Windsor, Ontario (May 22, 2019)
- Prairie Community Roundtable, Olds, Alberta (May 29, 2019)
- Northern Community Roundtable, Whitehorse, Yukon (September 27, 2019)
- British Columbia Community Roundtable, Kelowna, British Columbia (October 25, 2019)
- Atlantic Community Roundtable, Sydney, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia (October 28, 2019)
- Quebec Community Roundtable, Sherbrooke, Quebec (October 31, 2019)
- Central Idea Camp, Ottawa, Ontario (May 15, 2019)
- Prairie Idea Camp, Calgary, Alberta (September 19, 2019)
- Quebec Idea Camp, Montreal, Quebec (October 8, 2019)
- Atlantic Idea Camp, Mount Pearl, Newfoundland and Labrador (October 16, 2019)
- British Columbia Idea Camp, Victoria, British Columbia (October 30, 2019)
- Future Cities Summit, Toronto, Ontario (November 6-8, 2019)

Key Result 2: Provide Capacity Support Services Directly to Communities

To date, more than 150 municipalities and Indigenous communities have sought and received expert advice through the Network's event-based programs and advisory service's personalized supports. Between April-November, 2019, the following activities were delivered:

Delivery Service Process	Total
Outreach	1000+
Total communities	109
Intake (consortium capacity)	55
Regional pilot (held capacity)	13

UNCLASSIFIED

Active communities	41
Intake call process	36
Baseline self-assessment questionnaire completed	26
Needs assessment initiated or completed	21
Capacity- building action plan (CAP)	21

Communities of all types and sizes have accessed CSN's programming. Between April and November 2019, the following capacity-building diagnostics and activities were delivered, including to participants in the Smart Cities Challenge:

Type	Advisory Service Intake	Intake Call Process	Baseline Self-Assessment Questionnaire completed	Needs Assessment Initiated or Completed	Capacity-building Action Plan
Indigenous	2	1	0	0	0
Large	4	4	4	4	4
Medium	17	15	10	7	7
Small	20	17	12	10	10
Rural or Northern	13	13	8	7	7
English-Speaking	28	26	18	15	15
French-Speaking	13	10	8	6	6
Finalists	12	11	8	7	7
Non-Finalists	29	25	18	14	14
Communities	41	36	26	21	21

The CSN's Advisory Service, designed to assist in particular lower capacity communities (e.g. small, rural, remote, isolated and northern) has created a curriculum consisting of 32 learning modules. These modules are based on OpenNorth's "Open Smart Cities" domains: Data, Governance, Hardware and Software, and People and Engagement) and consist of written materials (e.g. guidelines and templates) as well as online webinars, workshops, and podcasts.

Key Result 3:

Establish Active Networks with Key Actors in all Regions

Through the implementation of the *Community Solutions Network*, Evergreen has established itself as the lead not-for-profit player in smart cities issues in Canada. Over the course of the past year, Evergreen has also built a strong and diverse network of partners across the country that together support the successful implementation of *Community Solutions Network* events

UNCLASSIFIED

and activities. The following are some of the key national and regional partners and their roles in supporting Evergreen and OpenNorth in the implementation of the project:

First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC)

- In collaboration with its regional partners, FNIGC conducts unique data-gathering initiatives that build culturally relevant portraits of the lives of First Nations people and the communities they live in. FNIGC is contributing to the development the Network's approach to engaging indigenous communities in post-colonial and reconciliation contexts.

Intelligent Communities Forum Canada (ICF)

- ICF is a national network of cities and regions, with a think tank at its center, and a mission is to help communities use information and communications technology to create inclusive prosperity, tackle social and governance challenges, and enrich quality of life. ICF is designing and delivering the Network's small community roundtables to exchange key learnings and best practices, share success stories and technology-adoption strategies.

Western Regional Enterprise Network (WREN)

- A partnership between the Province of Nova Scotia and a number of regional municipalities, the Western REN leads an extensive network of business and public sector partnerships. Western REN is working with the CSN Advisory Panel to guide municipalities into the advisory service intake.

Communitech

- Communitech helps tech companies start, grow and succeed. Working with hundreds of SMEs and Canada's top entrepreneurs, Communitech has curated commercial opportunities for communities participating in the Network with established and emerging solution providers.

Community Foundations of Canada (CFC)

- A network of 191 community foundations operates across Canada, CFC works through grassroots relationships and bold coalitions to create systems-level change on the issues that matter to Canadians. Tapping into its Rural Philanthropic Network, CFC is delivering community support bursaries small communities, increasing access to Network events across Canada.

McConnell Foundation

- The McConnell Foundation is a private Canadian foundation that develops and applies innovative approaches to social, cultural, economic and environmental challenges, focusing on granting and investing, capacity building, convening, and co-creation with grantees, partners and the public. McConnell bridges numerous strategic partnerships with the Network and leverages investments in urban data and governance to support participating communities.

UNCLASSIFIED

Quebec International

- Québec International is the economic development agency for the Quebec City capital region, working to develop and promote local professionals and businesses. Connecting the Network with small- and medium-sized enterprises across the province and facilitating institution partnerships has been the focus of Quebec International.

Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic (CIPPIC)

- CIPPIC is Canada's first and only public interest technology law clinic, focusing on cutting edge issues including copyright law, data governance, algorithmic decision-making, internet governance, net neutrality, state surveillance, privacy and free speech. CIPPIC developed courses on data governance and privacy in open smart cities and advises the Network on data governance.

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

- ICLEI is a global network of more than 1,750 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Active in 100+ countries, we influence sustainability policy and drive local action for low emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development. ICLEI is a knowledge and content partner within the Network.

Tech Manitoba

- Tech Manitoba represents Manitoba's growing tech sector. They are an industry-led association that helps companies thrive and grow through collaboration, education and promotion. Tech Manitoba has been central to organizing the Network's matchmaking opportunities between solution providers and communities in Manitoba.

Cape Breton Partnership

- The Cape Breton Partnership brings together people who believe in the power of working together to increase economic opportunities and aims to transform Cape Breton-Unama'ki into the most creative and prosperous place on earth. Together with the Network, the Cape Breton Partnership has worked to identify regional priorities and smart cities opportunities for its communities.

Rogers Cybersecure Catalyst

- The Catalyst helps Canadians and Canadian companies seize the opportunities and tackle the challenges of cybersecurity and is collaboration with industry, governments and academic partners. The Catalyst is working with the Network to create access points for communities to gain knowledge and keep their digital infrastructure secure.

Canadian Urban Institute (CUI)

- CUI is a non-profit, applied research organization dedicated to achieving healthy urban development. CUI is a main implementation partner within the Network, delivering event-based programming and contributing to network development.

Connecting Windsor-Essex

- Focused on building an extensive high-speed fibre optic network to the region's leading institutions, the organization has provided services for the region's businesses and in

UNCLASSIFIED

under-serviced, rural areas. The Network has worked with Connecting Windsor-Essex to generate lessons learned and best practices for rural communities in Canada.

Pinnguaq Association

- Pinnguaq Association is a not-for-profit organization, incorporating Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math into unique learning applications to promote storytelling, health, wellness and growth with rural and remote communities. The Association works with the Network as a key knowledge and capacity partner in Canada's north.

BC Tech

- BC Tech provides the place and programs to help British Columbia's emerging information and communication technology entrepreneurs, and advocates for the policies that allow the tech community to collaborate, learn, and grow.

Inclusive Design Research Centre (IDRC)

- The IDRC is a research and development centre at OCAD University where an international community of open source developers, designers, researchers, advocates, and volunteers work together to ensure that emerging information technology and practices are designed inclusively. The IDRC supports the Network's inclusivity and accessibility strategy.

Key Result 4: Research and Knowledge Sharing

A primary delivery instrument of the *Community Solutions Network* is the Community Solutions Network Portal (www.communitysolutionsnetwork.ca). The portal is a website that serves as a communication platform for communities, small- and medium-sized enterprises, academics, not-for profits and private sector stakeholders in the smart cities domain. It allows stakeholders to learn and connect with each other and learn about new and emerging smart cities issues in Canada.

The portal provides updates on upcoming events, webinars, podcasts, as well as hosts a compendium of best practices, research materials, news items and the 20 smart cities finalist proposals. These materials enable interested stakeholders to gain access to capacity-building tools.

Most recently, in partnership with researchers from Ryerson University and Royal Roads University, the *Community Solutions Network* has produced a Community Solutions Research Series which provides accessible, and practical pieces for a primary audience of municipal staff and Indigenous leaders across Canada, as well as a secondary audience of provincial and federal government staff, elected officials, civil society, and private sector. These materials are available through the portal.